



WOMAN'S AUXILIARY

TO THE CALIFORNIA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Your Auxiliary's Role in American Medical Education Foundation

In 1951, the National Woman's Auxiliary to the A.M.A. took on the support of the American Medical Education Foundation as one of its major projects. In doing so, it embraced and endorsed the A.M.E.F. objectives: (1) to interpret the needs of medical education to the American public; (2) to encourage the advancement of medical training standards in the United States; (3) to preserve academic freedom in medical schools as well as equality of educational opportunity; (4) to foster the training of a sufficient number of competent physicians to meet the nation's health needs.

As a first step toward working with the A.M.E.F., your Auxiliary got acquainted with its background as well as its current problems.

YESTERDAY'S PROBLEMS . . . Back in 1905, the A.M.A. faced a critical situation. Medical education in the United States was lagging far behind that in many European countries. The standards of the more than 160 medical schools then functioning were haphazard. There were great differences in this regard between schools. Some of the schools were accepting entrants without complete high school educations.

How to remedy this? The first big step was taken by setting up an A.M.A. Council on Medical Education. The second big step was taken by publishing, in 1910, the results of a study made jointly by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the A.M.A. Council. This report revolutionized American medical education. It brought about standards both for the medical schools and for the entering students which have become second to none in the world. It resulted in the weeding out of many inadequate medical schools. It gave the impetus which American medical education needed to start on its way toward the phenomenal strides it made in the decades that followed.

TODAY'S PROBLEMS . . . Today we can take stock of these strides with pride: The unparalleled advances made in American medical research; the high caliber of our practicing physicians; our American standards of health—the highest in the world.

In order to maintain our top-notch standards, we need a great deal of money. The average cost of financing the American education of a practicing physician today runs between \$10,000 and \$12,000. We are now graduating close to 7,000 medical students each year. Our annual "crop" of medical graduates, then, is costing between \$70,000,000 and \$84,000,000. Plans call for increasing the number to 7,500 in 1960. Our 79 accredited medical schools have, in many cases, woefully inadequate facilities.

Aid in the financing of our medical schools, then, is a crucial need. Your Auxiliary is proud to share in the responsibility for meeting that need through its work with the A.M.E.F.

TO INCREASE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING . . . One of our most important functions is to acquaint not only our own members but the public with the complexities of the current situation in medical education. There are many common misconceptions. Few people realize that today we have the largest annual turn-out of graduating physicians, more approved medical schools and the largest medical enrollment that we have ever had. The vital importance of medical education to the health and welfare of the American people is another factor we must help publicize. Back of the successful control of any disease are the years of study and research which our medical schools make possible.

Because recent exigencies in some of our medical schools have called for urgent action, the A.M.A. is supporting current legislation which would also provide for federal funds to be used for physical facilities only on a "one-time" appropriation basis. Aware of the pitfalls in all-out federal subsidization, your Auxiliary is working with you for this proposed legislation.

FUND-RAISING PROJECTS . . . Of equal importance is the role your Auxiliary plays in fund-raising for the A.M.E.F. Last year, here in California, we raised nearly \$5,300. The National Auxiliary contribution to the A.M.E.F. topped \$80,000. Most county auxiliaries have a fund-raising project to help support the A.M.E.F. Last year, 12 of 30 county auxiliaries in California met or exceeded their A.M.E.F. quotas. Only three failed to contribute. Two counties, Alameda and Los Angeles, donated over \$1,000 each, and Sonoma County gave over \$500, more than \$1 per member.

All sorts of methods of fund-raising are employed to get funds for A.M.E.F. Some Auxiliaries add \$1 to their annual dues and earmark it for A.M.E.F.; others use white elephant sales, parties or dances to raise money. Donations "in memory" or to mark special events can be made through your Auxiliary. One notable effort was instituted by an out-of-state auxiliary which held a "dishrag party"; this set in motion the crocheting of dishrags by Auxiliary members all over the country. Their sale raised more than \$15,000.

THIS YEAR'S PROGRAM . . . Your Auxiliary plans for the coming year call for the raising of funds to top those of last year. We aim for at least the \$6,000 mark in A.M.E.F. donations. Furthermore, we shall continue to bend our efforts to keep ourselves—and the public—aware of the crucial needs of medical education, and of the great contribution which it makes to American life today.